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DPC 222

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS AND RADIO NEWS BRIEFING, TUESDAY,
OCTOBER 23, 1962, 12:30 P.M.

MR. WHITE: Well, greetings to the night watch. I hope some of you got more sleep than I did last night.

We will have later today the text of the Secretary's remarks at the OAS as a Department release. As most of you know, the OAS has released it as an OAS release. We make it for our own records.

Oh, yes, and also as soon as we get word that the Ambassador of Jamaica has been in and out, we will release to you the text of his remarks on the presentation of his letters of credence, plus the President's reply.

I'm asked to call to your attention the signing at 11:30 tomorrow morning of a Shellfish Sanitation Agreement (Laughter)

This is in the anti-climax category. The signing of the Shellfish Sanitation Agreement between the United States and Japan, which will take place up in the Bureau of Far East reception room. Assistant Secretary Harriman and Surgeon General Luther Terry will sign for the United States and Ambassador Akasai will sign for Japan. I'm very happy for you and your photographers to be present if you have time to do so.

That is all I have, really, gentlemen.

Q Linc, can you give us any guidance as to when this proclamation will be issued today?

A I think you will have to keep in touch with Mr. Salinger on that. I don't know, frankly.

Q Can you give us any idea what has happened now to the guidelines on shipping which were put out?

A Well, the order is presently being reviewed by the agencies concerned, pending the President's quarantine proclamation.

Q Is that all you have?

Q Linc, is there any possibility that the quarantine proclamation will knock this thing out or not?

A No, no, no.

Q You don't mean to imply that in this?

A I don't mean to imply that at all.

Q Do you have any idea of when the shipping order may be--I believe it's an Executive Order that has to be issued on it--when that will be forthcoming?

A I just can't say definitely. I think the quarantine proclamation will come first. How soon thereafter, I just don't know, Stew.

Q But is it the intention to go ahead with the other?

A That's correct.

Q I'm sorry, Linc. This quarantine order will not wipe out the necessity for--

A No, indeed. They will go ahead with the other as well.

Q And they will be more or less on the same lines which we already know about before, the basic lines?

A That's right. I'm still in that twilight zone for background, yes.

Q What was it you didn't wish to imply?

A That the four-point proposition was dead because of the other development. By no means.

Q With regard to the other development--

A Yes, sir?

Q --do you have any comment on, or assessment of, the Soviet reaction so far, and can you--I'll get it all in at once--do you have the note they gave Kohler in Moscow today, and so forth?

A Unless my colleagues can correct me, I don't think we have it here. Of course it has moved on the ticker, and so on, but I have no comment on it at this time. Does anybody know? Has it actually been received yet?

MR. REAP: I don't know.

Q Do you have any comment on the public Soviet reaction, Linc, such as was issued by Tass and broadcast by the Soviet Union?

A No. No.

Q Linc, is it expectable that there will be a public response to any of these Moscow statements later in the day?

A This is a pure guesstimate on my part. I would doubt it.

Q Linc, yesterday there was a piece on the ticker that said that we had warned Mexico against the almost certain outbreak of riots as a result of our action yesterday. Do you know anything about that?

A No.

Q Communist riots?

A No, no.

Q Linc, do you have any information on the proximity of Soviet ships now at sea to Cuba, when they might arrive?

A No, I have nothing on that.

Q Do you know, there is a story somewhere, I think it is in the Star, that about 20 Soviet vessels are en route to Cuba now. Do you know anything about that number?

A I don't have anything on that either.

Q Does the Secretary have appointments with allied Ambassadors today on the subject?

A He saw them all yesterday.

Q Have any of them called for further appointments with him to express their views?

A I'm told we have not been informed of any.

Q Linc, only 98 Ambassadors came in yesterday.

I noted the absence of Ruanda-Urundi, Mauritania and Dahomey. Is there any significance in that?

A Does anybody know the explanation of that? They have small missions here. They may be up in New York with practically no on~~g~~here in Washington.

MR. BLSHOP: Many of them serve in a dual capacity.

Q Linc, according to one of the New York papers, the blockade was actually invoked last Friday and even two ships were interrupted and searched and then permitted to continue. Do you have anything on that?

A I have absolutely nothing on that.

Q Linc, there is a story on the wire that the Cuban Government has notified Pan American and KLM that the Havana Airport is now closed until further notice to serve airlines. Have you any confirmation on that?

A I have not heard that. I have noted stories to the effect that we have requested American carriers to stay away from Cuba. So I would think the other is fairly relevant.

Q Linc, will there be some sort of a grace

period after the issuance of the proclamation?

A Excuse me, Joe, I'm not Olympus. I honestly don't know. I would assume that the minute the proclamation goes into effect it goes into effect, period.

Q What do you have in the works for this afternoon? Anything worth staying awake for?

(Laughter)

A I hesitate to say it will be calm. I don't know, Stu. There is nothing in the works other than the Secretary's speech.

Q How many hours of sleep can we expect tonight?

A I would say that that would depend on other elements than the United States Government.

Q Linc, do you have any word on how close the closest Soviet ship is?

A If I had, I wouldn't be able to tell you. So let's don't play games here.

Q Linc, any plans for the Secretary to go up to the UN to the Security Council?

A Not that I have heard about.

Q Linc,-

A That is always a possibility, but I know of no current plans.

Q Any word on when the Security Council is convening?

A Three o'clock.

Q No, four. The ticker says four.

A The ticker says four. I beg your pardon.

There was some confusion as to whether it was three or four. Four o'clock.

Q Linc, can you clarify for us what our policy is towards airplanes which may be carrying--

A I can add nothing to what you have already been told. The President--I don't have the speech before me--I think he said "other carriers, as required." Incidentally, in this connection, we welcome the statement of the Canadian Foreign Minister that landing rights in Canada will be denied to Soviet aircraft en route to or from Cuba.

Q He did not include Cuban aircraft, did he?

A Not specifically. Whether that is covered or not, you will have to ask the Canadians. I don't know the answer to that.

Q The Canadian Foreign Minister, did you say?

A Yes.

Q Linc, you say Soviet aircraft. Was his order all inclusive, all Soviet aircraft?

A That was my understanding, yes.

Q Do you have some reaction--

A Again you crosscheck this with the Canadians.

I don't want to misrepresent it.

Q I'm not questioning it. I just don't know.

Q Do you have some reactions of some other countries on that point?

A Nothing that I am prepared to talk about at this stage.

Q Can you tell us what the Department's feeling is in general about reaction around the world? Do you have anything on that?

A I really think, gentlemen, that you will have to depend on statements from the various capitals on this. So far I, as Linc White speaking, I think it has been exceptionally good.

Q Thank you very much.

Q Linc--

A Yes?

Q Can I just get this clear. You said you are not prepared to talk about other allies cutting back on Soviet flights. Does this indicate that we are asking the allies to ban Soviet ships?

A To do what?

Q Did you mean to imply that we are asking the allies to bar the Soviet flights?

A Well, this is a matter that comes up in NATO from time to time. I think it's up in NATO, yes.

Q What countries do Soviet flights to Cuba go through?

A That is a technical question that I can't answer. I just don't know.

Q There is also a Czechoslovak-Cuba joint air service that runs between Havana and Prague by way of Africa. Have you had any US questions concerning that to any of those African countries?

A The question is he understands that there is a Czech-Cuban carrier that goes between Havana and Prague by way of Africa. I don't know of anything on that. Well, let's do this BACKGROUND. I'm told by my colleague that he does not think that is in regular service. Only one flight has been attempted, and I'm told it wasn't Czech either.

(Laughter)

A little further East. Soviet, in other words.

Q Good night, Mr. White.

A Good night, sirs and ma'ams. Have a nice schnore.

[Whereupon at 12:43 p.m. the briefing was closed.